

Vienna,  
25 th Febr. '88

Dear Sujatha,

Thank you very much for your letter with the intro to your translation of my Buddhism in Daily Life. You wrote that you found it somewhat long. I do not know. You write about your background, a well organised Dhamma life, abounding with centers of study. Life in a tradition where elders and teachers are respected, where people are eager to serve the monks. I was pleased to hear about your mother, your relatives who were all active. I could not read what you wrote about Mrs. Ellen who helped with the translation.

You could leave out that I helped you find the texts, because that is nothing, I could not do much since I do not know the Singhalese Tipitaka. If you are wondering what you can shorten, maybe p. 3: The translator should know English.... On the other hand, it helps people to know your background, and they know the names of the monks you mention.

I also received your letter before this one (about the Dēvas) and I answered that already. Did you ever receive copies of my Letters to Mr. Fex, and the two letters to Alan Weller? These are about meditation centers. Centers are very different, as and as you once mentioned to me, <sup>several</sup> many of them in Sri Lanka, or, maybe the one you were leading, is a study center where people get instruction. If they would stay home they would not find any books and not learn Abhidhamma. But there are centers, like Mr. Fex's in Thailand, where they teach people to behave in an unnatural way, and with wrong understanding of the texts of the Satipatthana sutta. This I explained to Mr. Fex. If people think that they should suppress defilements while in the center they do not get to know their akusala, and ~~that~~ ~~is~~ awareness of akusala should be learnt, otherwise it can never be eradicated. If there is not awareness of akusala we take it for self, whereas it should be seen as just a conditioned reality. I also speak about this subject in my "Pilgrimage in Sri Lanka", which you may get at the Buddhist Information Center (is it Greenpath? 50, Ananda Cumaraswamy Mawath, Colombo 7). I also go briefly into the subject in my Buddhism in Daily life / p. 161, 162.

As far as I have noticed it, people get impatient and think that they should strive for arahatship at once. It took many kappas to bring us to this point today, so why do they think nibbana can be attained quickly? Many more kappas. If we think too much ahead we may get either impatient or have despair, so, we should pay attention rather to seeing now, visible object now, lobha now,



dosa now. That is the middle way, just ordinary, daily life, as we are, as we behave when we are with other people. I find it easier when I am alone to have good and noble thoughts about others, but when someone speaks harshly to me, my goodness, straight away aversion. But all this should be known. So that it can be seen as conditioned phenomena. We may think ahead of time again and again I must have metta, we may think and think, but, the conditions may not be for metta. There we have it again, akusala. I would like to help the reader to learn honesty, sincerity with themselves. I think my "Abhidhamma in Daily Life" can help them to be more realistic with their akusala cittas arising in thought processes. I wonder whether you got that book? It is not possible to live like arahats without lobha, dosa and moha, because when we look at a cup, we are already absorbed by the details and outlines, lobha already, millions of akusala citta within one minute. But I think I understand what you mean. We can keep eight precepts on Uposatha day and then one has the lifestyle of the arahats. One accumulates conditions for arahatship which may be once, in the far, far future. There should even now be accumulations of paramis, like detachment, and also honesty, truthfulness.

I found it delightful to read about your celebration of the fiftieth wedding anniversary in the way of your translation of the book. When will it be? I want to express again my appreciation of all your kusala.

I would have liked to send you Bodhileaf no. B 112, printed in Buddhis Publication Society, Kandy, two of my Dhamma letters. But at the moment I do not have spare copies. They will send me later. Or can you get hold of it?

With all good wishes for the well-being and health of your husband and yourselves,  
kindest regards from